



**STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION  
FOR  
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND AUGMENTATIVE ASSISTIVE  
COMMUNICATION SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS**

**RFI # 33136-00617  
March 27, 2017**

**1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

The State of Tennessee, Department of Education issues this Request for Information ("RFI") for the purpose of identifying vendors in the marketplace who can support schools and classrooms in assistive technology and alternative augmentative communication (AT-AAC) implementation and determining a budget for this work. This work will consist of working directly with students and teachers in evaluation, implementation, progress monitoring, and instruction related to students with minimal or emerging communication skills. We appreciate your input and participation in this process.

**2. BACKGROUND:**

The department is considering a future RFP to build capacity within school in the evaluation, development, training, instruction, and progress monitoring required to develop and design systems for students with complex needs to communicate and self-advocate to peers and within the community and initiate sustained professional learning communities (PLCs) composed of the teachers, speech language pathologists (SLPs), occupational therapists (OTs), and other identified specialists within the schools in that area.

**3. POTENTIAL SCOPE OF SERVICES**

1. 3 people/organizations identified to support state-wide, 1 per each grand division
2. Work within schools and classrooms to identify communication and AT needs
3. Facilitate AT-AAC evaluations including parent input, OT, and academic needs
4. Create and facilitate trainings for student support teams. Trainings should include:
  - 4.1.1. Building communication competence
  - 4.1.2. Vocabulary acquisition
  - 4.1.3. Troubleshooting device/equipment

- 4.1.4. Data collection and progress monitoring
- 4.1.5. Connecting with peers and home
- 4.1.6. AT-AAC option including low tech, high tech, and cloud-based
- 5. Develop and facilitate regional PLCs for educators; add new educators annually
  - 5.1. Transfer ownership of PLC to the educators within the 5 year grant for sustainability
- 6. Develop a website to distribute quick resource sheets, regular newsletter, information related to new technology, tools for progress monitoring, success stories, and available supports and resources in the region, and PLC information
- 7. Quarterly meetings with state personnel
- 8. Meet monthly, in person or through a conference call to collaborate and co-plan in order to be one state-wide initiative with consistent support and messaging
- 9. Purchase and maintain equipment, devices, or software to support student communication access.
- 10. Two-times a year meet with TRIAD to coordinate and collaborate regarding shared students, classrooms, and/or districts
- 11. Use annual Learner Characteristics Inventory data to identify target schools
- 12. Provide support with priority to target schools but to any school within the grand division
- 13. Build capacity within the schools
  - 13.1. Intensive communication support provide annually to no less than 5 students with significantly complex communication needs
  - 13.2. Provide training and guidance on creating communication building supports and structure with no less than 5 classrooms in at least 3 districts
- 14. Develop a protocol for creating a safe learning and collaborative environment for the school, educator, parents, and student to begin work together with the Contractor
- 15. Work with families and their health care providers including Medicaid and SSI to purchase needed devices and/or technology for the student

### 3. COMMUNICATIONS:

- 3.1. Please submit your response to this RFI via email to [Kristen.B.McKeever@tn.gov](mailto:Kristen.B.McKeever@tn.gov).
- 3.2. Any prospective Respondent having questions and comments concerning this RFI may provide them in writing no later than the Written Questions & Comments Deadline detailed in the RFI Section 4, Schedule of Events. The main point of contact will be:

Kristen McKeever, Director, Division Operations  
 Department of Education  
 710 James Robertson Parkway  
 Andrew Johnson Tower, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 Nashville, TN 37243  
 (615) 741-0572  
[Kristen.B.McKeever@tn.gov](mailto:Kristen.B.McKeever@tn.gov)

- 3.3. Please reference RFI # 3316-00617 with all communications to this RFI.

### 4. RFI SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

| EVENT | TIME<br>(Central Time Zone) | DATE<br>(all dates are State business days) |
|-------|-----------------------------|---|
|-------|-----------------------------|---|

|    |   |  |                |
|----|---|--|----------------|
| 1. | RFI Issued                              |  | March 27, 2017 |
| 2. | Written Questions and Comments Deadline |  | April 27, 2017 |
| 3. | State Response to Questions & Comments  |  | May 4, 2017    |
| 4. | RFI Response Deadline                   |  | May 19, 2017   |

## 5. GENERAL INFORMATION:

5.1. Please note that responding to this RFI is not a prerequisite for responding to any future solicitations related to this project and a response to this RFI will not create any contract rights. Responses to this RFI will become property of the State.

5.2. The information gathered during this RFI is part of an ongoing procurement. In order to prevent an unfair advantage among potential respondents, the RFI responses will not be available until after the completion of evaluation of any responses, proposals, or bids resulting from a Request for Qualifications, Request for Proposals, Invitation to Bid or other procurement method. In the event that the state chooses not to go further in the procurement process and responses are never evaluated, the responses to the procurement including the responses to the RFI, will be considered confidential by the State.

5.3. The State will not pay for any costs associated with responding to this RFI.

## 6. INFORMATIONAL FORMS:

The State is requesting the following information from all interested parties. Please fill out the following forms:

| RFI # 33136-00617            |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM |  |
| 1.                           | RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:  |
| 2.                           | RESPONDENT CONTACT PERSON:<br>Name, Title:<br>Address:<br>Phone Number:<br>Email:                              |
| 3.                           | BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EXPERIENCE PROVIDING SIMILAR SCOPE OF SERVICES/PRODUCTS                                   |
| 4.                           | LIST SPECIFIC PRODUCTS, TOOLS, SOFTWARE, OR DEVICES YOU HAVE USED IN IMPLEMENTING AT-AAC SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS |

| COST INFORMATIONAL FORM |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1.                      | Describe what pricing units you typically utilize for similar services or goods (e.g., per hour, each, etc.):                               |
| 2.                      | Describe the typical price range for similar services or goods  |
| 3.                      | Describe any budgetary or payment terms that might influence your willingness or ability to submit a proposal or bid for this type of work. |

| ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1.                        | Please provide input on alternative approaches or additional things to consider that might benefit the State: |